

Gaithersburg Day Laborer Task Force Meeting
February 14, 2006, 7:30 p.m.
Casey Community Center, Room A

I. Approval of Summary of 2/07/06 Meeting

A motion was made to approve the February 7, 2006 Gaithersburg Day Laborer Task Force Meeting Summary. The motion passed.

II. Vote on Final Report – Task Force “Charge #1”

Amendments, as noted in last week’s summary had not yet been completed. The vote on charge #1 was deferred until next week. Task Force member Gloria Aparicio offered to amend the report.

III. Vote on Option E Report – “Consequences of Doing Nothing”

It was acknowledged that the Option E Report, “Consequences of Doing Nothing,” had generated a great deal of email among task force members. In regard to those emails, Chair Prentiss Searles stressed that requests for changes to documents-in-progress needed to be given in clear, concise terms (Example: Delete “Walker & Brookes Avenues” and insert “streets nearby”). Additionally, two options were identified for use in editing documents: turning on “track changes” in Word or showing the changes/additions in “bold”. These techniques will assist the person compiling the final version as well as help avoid any misunderstandings.

One task force member asked what should be done if a member disagrees with a report so strongly that he/she believes only a rewrite could remedy the situation. It was noted that if a task force member finds a particular option so compelling, they should actively work on the subcommittee and offer to write the report. Participation at the subcommittee level was stressed as key. Chair Prentiss Searles advised that any member that has issue with the direction in which a subcommittee is going, should pick up the phone and initiate a conversation with other subcommittee members. It was noted that sometimes email is not as effective as a phone call. Furthermore, it was noted that a task force member not participating at the subcommittee level but with strong feelings in regard to information contained in the report, should provide input to the subcommittee when the document is still a work-in-progress.

It was reported that in regard to the “Consequences of Doing Nothing” report, three people had offered significant rewrites of that document despite its being circulated in the following manner:

A (Friday) deadline had been established in which information for the “Do Nothing Report” was to be submitted. Task force members’ input was incorporated into the report and it was emailed around with along with a message that reminded members that the report was due for review at the upcoming meeting two days away. Members were urged to review it and provide final input.

It was stressed that, at some point, a cutoff needs to be established and that future distribution of work-in-progress documents should be handled in one of two ways:

- Distribute the document to subcommittee members
- Distribute the document to the entire task force.

The method of distribution would be decided by the leader of the subcommittee.

A motion was made to approve the “Consequences of Doing Nothing” research report. The motion passed. Two members (Dan Muller and Lucia da Costa Lima) were opposed, noting that they did not agree with portions of the report.

Subsequently, one of the members asked how the addendum process worked. It was noted that the February 7, 2006 meeting summary stated, “...additional information deemed worthy of inclusion but discovered after the report was finalized could be included as an addendum. To be considered for inclusion, addendums would be submitted by task force members and voted on by the full task force.” It was noted that a view supported by multiple members could be included as a dissenting opinion. The question arose as to the problem with a one-person dissent. The following two concerns were identified:

Task force members have invested a tremendous amount of work into the proceedings and individual views could be interpreted as carrying as much weight as those of the entire task force. (One member countered that it would be unlikely that a single view would carry as much weight as one based on consensus.)

It would be counterproductive as there would be no incentive to work together if everyone could in essence just write their own report.

It was noted that the opportunity always exists for any individual to express his/her thoughts or concerns directly to the Mayor and City Council. In regard to the task force, members were reminded that it was a group effort which individuals bought into when they agreed to become members. It was stated that the process involves sharing ideas and building consensus. Individuals or groups that disagree with the majority view, convey their position by casting an opposing vote.

IV. Report & Discussion: Option B – “Ordinances”

Lauren Husted, leader of Subcommittee B, provided the task force with a draft of the Option B Report (Pass ordinances to prevent soliciting jobs from parking lots, public streets and sidewalks). It was noted that the first page, acknowledging contacts, was to be included as part of the report. In reviewing the report, it was noted that, at this point in time, there was no clear model that could be held up as an example due to unresolved legal challenges. However, research did support the importance of having law enforcement personnel dedicated to working on day laborer issues and related enforcement efforts. Subsequently, the importance of including in the final report the cost, in both manpower and dollars, was stressed.

Following the review of the research report, a discussion ensued in which task force members identified the following issues:

Need for property owners to encourage day laborers to use established centers. Although the Silver Spring Day Laborer Center was in operation, people were still gathering in front a nearby 7-Eleven. However, day laborers in Wheaton no longer congregate outside of Duron Paint. It was wondered if the difference could be attributed to property owners seeking assistance from the police.

In regard to a day laborer center, individuals that don't like the lottery process or are willing to work for less money would still present off site loitering problems.

Use of ordinances to encourage day laborers to use established centers.

A motion was made to ask the City Attorney to provide a list of specific ordinances that would apply to the day laborer issue and related problems. The motion passed.

In regard to the completion of the Option B Report, the following deadlines were identified:

Task force comments on Option B draft need to be submitted to Lauren Husted by Tuesday, **February 21, 2006.**

A revised report will be sent to the task force by **February 26** for review at the **February 28** meeting.

It was noted that a copy of the Option B report will be sent to Cindy Hines for distribution to all board members.

In regard to the research reports, the Chair noted that some of the proposed additions had included recommendations, which actually belong in the final report. Task force members were urged to note recommendations as they review research reports so that they can be discussed during the recommendation phase.

V. Report & Discussion: Option C – “Utilize Existing Employment Centers”

Subcommittee C leader Rich Koch reported that the task force was working on identifying/surveying employment centers and gathering information on faith-based groups. Additionally, they have contacted the City’s Director of Human Services Crystal Carr and obtained a list of 40 – 50 groups/organizations that provide support services.

VI. New Business

Copies of zoning maps were provided to all task force members and a copy of the zoning ordinance was given to Cindy Hines for conversion to a pdf file and distribution to all task force members.

A revision of an earlier letter by Rev. Piel was submitted to the task force. It was noted that the letter was a follow-up to an earlier request for input from the Ad Hoc Committee. It was noted that the letter would be posted on the web.

VII. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 9:09 p.m.